



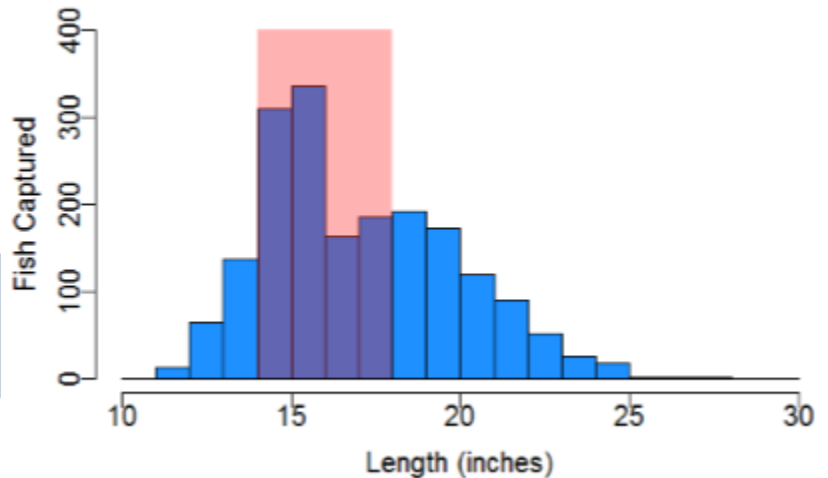
## Spring Fisheries Survey Summary Grindstone Lake, Sawyer County, 2018

The Spooner DNR Treaty Team conducted a fyke netting survey on Grindstone Lake from May 9-18, 2018 to assess the adult walleye and muskellunge populations in the lake. Electrofishing surveys conducted between May 23-31 documented the status of smallmouth bass and largemouth bass. The intent of all surveys was to determine total population size. That statistic is not reported here, but information on sizes of fish captured and their relative abundance are provided. Quality, preferred, and memorable sizes referenced in this summary are based on standard proportions of world record lengths developed for each species by the American Fisheries Society.

### Walleye (Adult)



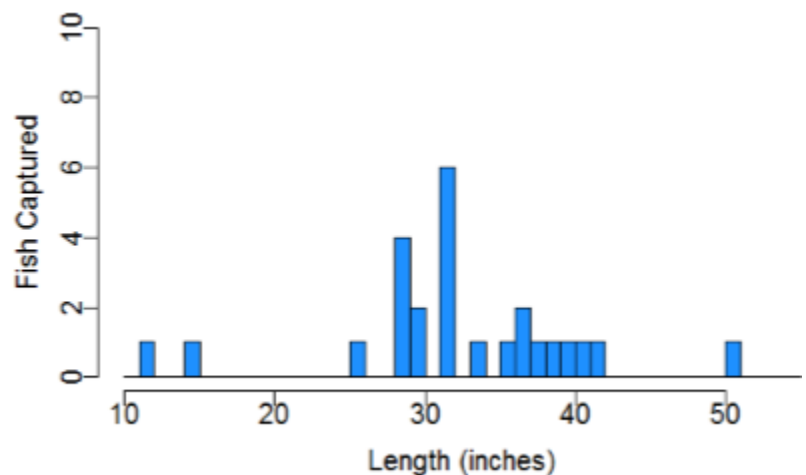
Captured 37 per net-night $\geq 10$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 15$ "	72%
Preferred Size $\geq 20$ "	17%



### Muskellunge



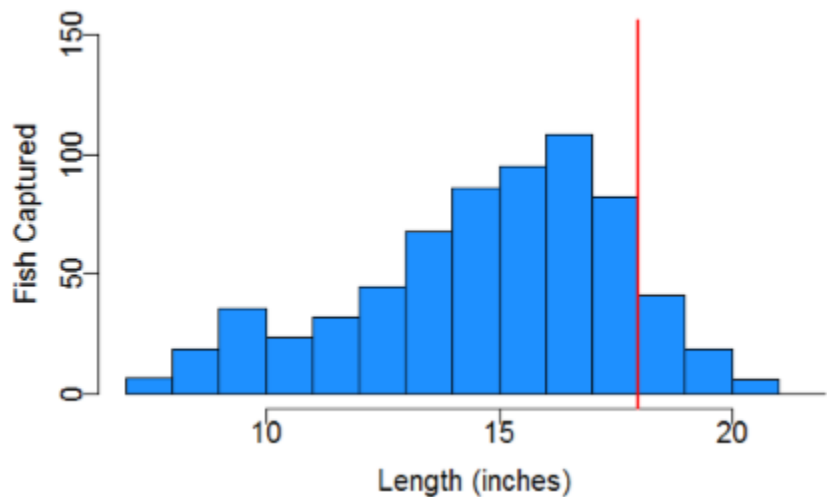
Captured 1.0 per net-night $\geq 20$ inches	
Quality Size $\geq 30$ "	70%
Memorable Size $\geq 42$ "	4%



### Smallmouth bass



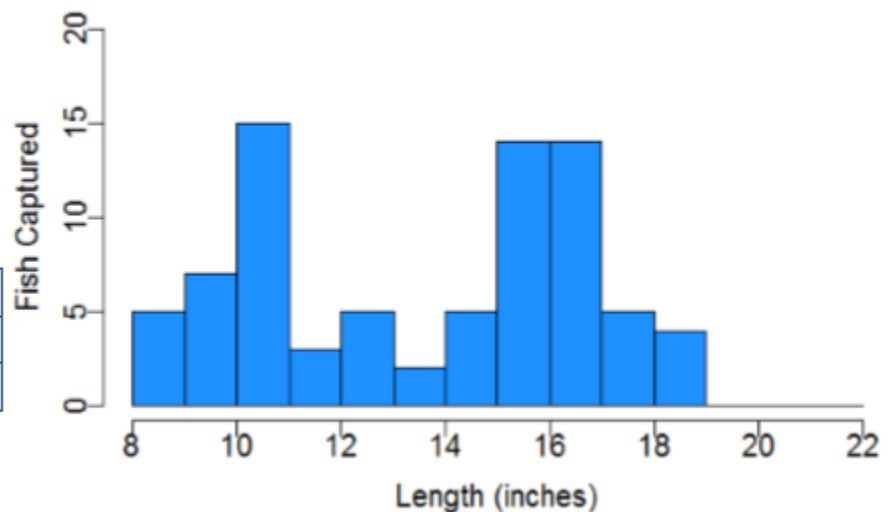
<b>Captured 30 per mile <math>\geq 7</math> inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq 11</math>"</b>	<b>87%</b>
<b>Preferred Size <math>\geq 14</math>"</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Memorable Size <math>\geq 17</math>"</b>	<b>22%</b>



### Largemouth bass



<b>Captured 4 per mile <math>\geq 8</math> inches</b>	
<b>Quality Size <math>\geq 12</math>"</b>	<b>62%</b>
<b>Preferred Size <math>\geq 15</math>"</b>	<b>47%</b>



## Summary of Results

Capture rates were high for adult walleye during the netting portion of this survey. Many of the fish observed were either in the protected slot (14-18 inches, red shaded area above) or above it. Fish under the slot length were less common. Overall, walleye size is excellent, with 72% of all walleye being over 15 inches. That figure is nearly identical to the last survey in 2015 when 71% were over 15 inches. Walleye over 20 inches were somewhat more common in 2018 (17% of all walleye captured) than in 2015 (10%). Grindstone Lake continues to have strong natural reproduction of walleye which drives a healthy fishery that supports a considerable amount of harvest.

Muskellunge were captured at moderate rate with many smaller individuals. These results are encouraging for the future of the Grindstone muskellunge fishery. Overall muskellunge abundance has been declining since the early 2000's and recruitment of new fish, either through stocking or natural reproduction, appeared to be limited. This survey found a fair number of muskellunge under 30 inches, including several between 10-15 inches that were likely stocked fish from 2017. Recruiting new muskellunge into this population will be critical to restoring good musky fishing. Size of muskellunge in Grindstone Lake has never been an issue and several large fish were captured as a part of this survey, including a 50-inch female.

Smallmouth bass are a popular species for anglers on Grindstone Lake and the population appears to be relatively healthy. Capture rates for adult smallmouth were high, and 65% of all smallmouth captured were over 14 inches. While Grindstone Lake currently has many quality-sized smallmouth, a new (2018) 18-inch minimum length limit (red line above) and 1 daily bag limit regulation aims to further improve the population. Largemouth bass are less common in Grindstone Lake and are primarily restricted to the weedier bays.



Fisheries technician Evan Sniadajewski with a pair of big Grindstone Lake smallmouth. Photo by Max Wolter.

Report by Max Wolter – Fisheries Biologist, Sawyer County  
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Reviewed and Approved by Jeff Kampa – Area Fisheries Supervisor